THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) to (c) Government are aware that a number of products are being marketed in India as food supplements. Food supplements are being exported and some of the food supplements of foreign origin are also finding their way into India. Government are aware of the need for an Act to regulate production and marketing and export of food supplements.

Replacement of old cable in Rajasthan

*268. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plans to replace the old telecom cable with the optical fibre cable in all major cities of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the changeover would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) There are plans to open 27 New RSUs (Remote Switching Units) & 12 DLCs (Digital Loop Carrier) system in major cities of Rajasthan Circle during 2002-2003 by using OFC (Optical Fibre Cable) from main exchange to RSU/DLC. Thus most of Telephone Connections working on old telecom cable shall be transferred to OF cables. However copper cable shall continue to be used from RSUs/DLCs to subscribers' premises for short distances.

(c) This is a continuous process as every year RSUs/DLCs are planned and commissioned depending upon the availability of resources thereby replacing the old Telecom cable by OF cable.

Grants to Nepal

*269. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to grant an assistance of Rs. 840 million to Nepal for setting up of the East-West Highway Optical Fibre Cable Network;

(b) if so, whether this would cover all the main cities and towns in the Himalayan Kingdom;

(c) whether any memorandum of understanding has been signed;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when, Government are likely to implement the memorandum of understanding?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Important cities and towns along the East West Highway of Nepal are proposed to be covered under the project.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) On 12.4.2002, an MoU has been signed between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government of Nepal regarding the project. The said MoU identifies TCIL as a project implementation agency on turnkey basis under the over all supervision by an independent consultant to be appointed by the Government of India.

(e) The project is likely to be implemented over a period of two years and is likely to commence immediately after the completion of necessary formalities like appointment of consultant etc. by the Government of India.

Upgradation and maintenance of National Highways

*270. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Highways currently designated as National Highways in the country alongwith the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that owing to poor maintenance, these highways have lost their original quality and purpose;

(c) whether requests have been received from various States to upgrade the Highways passing through their respective States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, and Government's reaction thereto and the action taken to maintain the high standard and utility of these highways?